

52 Card Pick-Up

Introduction: This team-building activity allows students to experience, first hand, the benefits to be had from cooperating with each other rather than working alone or arguing.

Number of people: Small group split into teams of 3-4

Materials: a pack of playing cards for each team, stop watch.

Time: 10 minutes

Directions:

1. Split the groups into teams of three or four.
2. Take out the playing cards from the pack, shuffle them and lay them face down on the floor in a mess.
3. Tell the team you are giving them a challenge—simply to gather up all the cards and put them back in order in the pack (ace through king for each suit) Let them know you will be timing them.
4. Record the time taken as soon as they have finished.



Debrief:

- Ask why it took them so long and if they could suggest ways to improve.
- How could they work together to get a quicker time?
- Talk through and help them summarize their suggestions. Usually they realize it will be better if they nominate who is going to be responsible for each suit and then agree to pass relevant cards to each other as they pick them up. They may also suggest working within strict areas instead of everyone trying to pick up all the cards.

Repeat the exercise. They will be astounded at how quickly they complete the task this second time by cooperating with each other.

Ask the students to reflect on what happened and to state what they have learned.